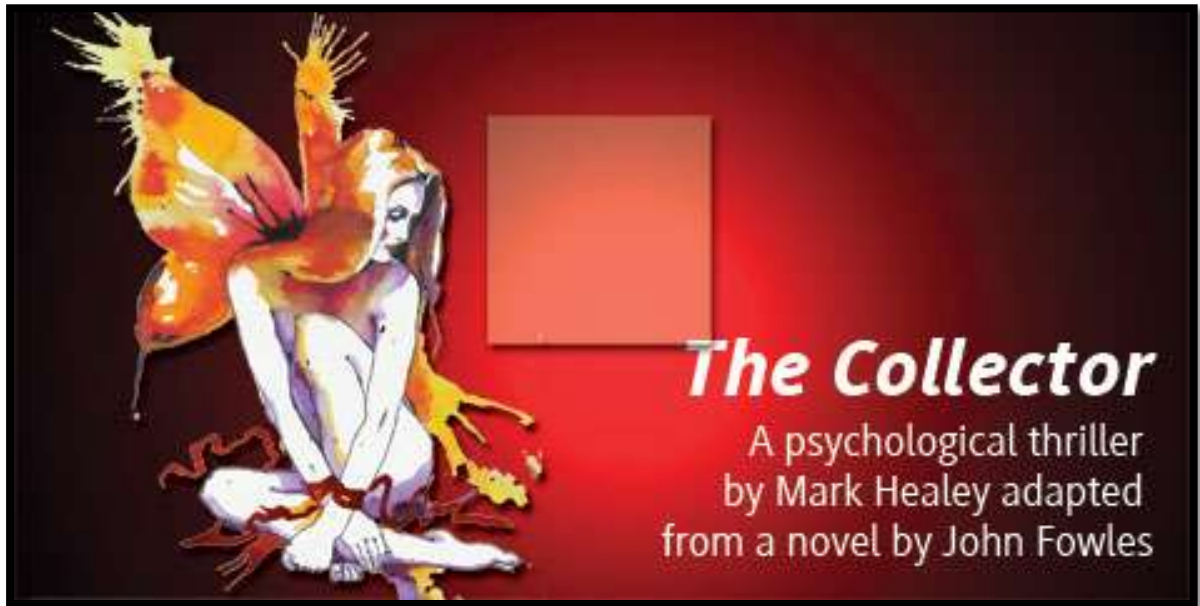


Almost a love story and more than a thriller:



The English Theatre Frankfurt 2014

Teacher`s Support Pack

The Collector by Mark Healy

An enthralling psychological thriller following socially inept Frederick Clegg, whose obsession with Miranda, leads him to abduct her, keeping her captive in a cellar. This intense and edgy piece explores the turbulence and confusion, the violence and the fear between the two.



1. The Author

Playwright and actor Mark Healy specializes in adapting classic literature for the stage. His other theatre writing include adaptations of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* and *Persuasion*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and *Dante's Dream*.

Assignment 1: The Title

1. The title of the play is called "**The Collector**".

Draw a mind-map, starting with: What is a "collector?"

What sort of things do people collect? Do men and women collect different things?

Do these collections reflect the personality of the collector?

Frederick Clegg collects butterflies. Beautiful but they soon die.

2. In the synopsis the terms **stalking** and **obsession** are mentioned: Look up the concept of the words in a dictionary. Note down all the words and expressions you associate with the explanations.

3. Telling from your results: what could be the themes of the play?

2. The Play (brief synopsis)

The plot is simple - ever since he first saw her, Frederick Clegg has been **obsessed** with Miranda Grey. The repressed, introverted butterfly collector admires the privileged art student from afar until he wins the Lottery and buys a remote country house, planning to bring her there as his "guest". Having abducted and imprisoned her in the cellar he soon finds reality is far from his fantasy.

Mark Healy's play is an adaptation of John Fowles's 1963 novel. Fowles's story resonates more deeply now that **stalking** has become part of the fabric of modern neurosis. As Frederick points out angrily at one point, if more people had the resources – a million pounds or more; a large deserted country house with tastefully decorated cellar – then more people would do as he had done. Healy has crafted a fairly taut two-hander, in which much of the tension derives from the possibility that Miranda may actually be won over if she leaves off her escape attempts for long enough.

3 a) John Fowles

Today Fowles is rightly considered one of Great Britain's living literary giants. *The Collector* was his first explosive novel. Interesting to note that prior to that he was an English teacher... John Fowles succeeded, as only the finest authors do, in offering readers his passionate version of the truth in a spectacularly magical way. Early in 1962, when he submitted a travel book to a literary agent. The agent enjoyed the book but suggested to Fowles that his skills were more suited to writing fiction.



Taking this advice to heart, Fowles began work on *The Collector*, convinced a small-scale book (rather than one of his longer pieces) would be more marketable as a first novel. Two events influenced his conception of the book: he attended a performance of *Bluebeard's Castle*—an opera about imprisoned women—and he came across a newspaper account of a young man who had kidnapped a girl and held her for over three months in a backyard air raid shelter outside London. Fowles wrote the first draft in less than a month. In July 1962, he took his manuscript to Tom Maschler, the literary director at Jonathan Cape who was to become his life-long editor and good friend. Maschler was electrified by *The Collector*, concluding that he had never read such a well-written first novel and a deal with Cape was quickly sealed.

3 b) Summary of the original novel by John Fowles

The novel is about a lonely young man, Frederick Clegg, who works as a clerk in a city hall, and collects butterflies in his spare time. The first part of the novel tells the story from his point of view.

Clegg is obsessed with Miranda Grey, a middle-class art student at the Slade School of Fine Art. He admires her from a distance, but is unable to make any contact with her because of lacking social skills. One day, he wins a large prize in the football pools. He stops working and buys an isolated house in the countryside. He feels lonely, however, and wants to be with Miranda. Unable to make any normal contact, Clegg decides to add her to his "collection" of pretty, petrified objects, in the hope that if he keeps her captive long enough, she will grow to love him.

After careful preparations, he kidnaps Miranda by drugging her with chloroform and locks her up in the cellar of his house. He is convinced that Miranda will start to love him after some time. However, when she wakes up, she confronts him with his actions. Clegg is embarrassed, and promises to let her go after a month. He promises to show her "every respect", pledging not to sexually molest her and to shower her with gifts and the comforts of home, on one condition: she can't leave the cellar.

Clegg rationalizes every step of his plan in cold, emotionless language; he seems truly incapable of relating to other human beings and sharing intimacy with them. He takes great

pains to appear normal, and is greatly offended at the suggestion that his motives are anything but reasonable and genuine.

The second part of the novel is narrated by Miranda in the form of fragments from a diary that she keeps during her captivity. Clegg scares her, and she does not understand him in the beginning. Miranda reminisces over her previous life throughout this section of the novel, and many of her diary entries are written either to her sister, or to a man named G.P., whom she respected and admired as an artist. Miranda reveals that G.P. ultimately fell in love with her, and subsequently severed all contact with her. Through Miranda's reflections while confined, Fowles explores a number of philosophical issues, such as the nature of art, humanity and God.

At first, Miranda thinks that Clegg has sexual motives for abducting her, but as his true character begins to be revealed, she realizes that this is not true. She starts to have some pity for her captor, comparing him to *Caliban* in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* because of his hopeless obsession with her. Clegg tells Miranda that his first name is Ferdinand (eventual winner of Miranda's affections in *The Tempest*).

Miranda tries to escape several times, but Clegg stops her. She also tries to seduce him to convince him to let her go. The only result is that he becomes confused and angry. When Clegg keeps refusing to let her go, she starts to fantasize about killing him. After a failed attempt to do so, Miranda passes through a phase of self-loathing. She decides that to kill Clegg would lower her to his level. She refrains from any further attempts to do so. Before she can try to escape again, she becomes seriously ill and dies.

The third part of the novel is narrated by Clegg. At first, he wants to commit suicide after he finds Miranda dead but, after he reads in her diary that she never loved him, he decides that he is not responsible and is better off without her. The book ends with his announcement that he plans to kidnap another girl.

Assignment 2: Background

Fowles explained in his follow-up book *The Aristos*, that the main point behind the novel was “to show what he felt the danger of class and intellectual divisions in a society where prosperity for the majority was becoming more widespread, particularly power (whether by wealth or position) getting into the hands of those intellectually unsuited to handle it.”

Comment on the above statement that Fowles made in “The Aristos” .

Discussion: In life, decisions at some point have to be made. Collective power sharing is admirable, but what about Miranda in “The Collector”, do you think she has any power, as a prisoner of Clegg? Discuss! why? / why not?

4. Fowles`discussion of the background to “*The Collector*”

In his second book, *The Aristos*, a collection of philosophical essays, Fowles wrote that he intended the novel to explore the danger of class and intellectual divisions in a society where prosperity for the majority was becoming more widespread, and power (whether by wealth or position) was gained by those intellectually unsuited to handle it.

He further discusses his inspiration for *The Collector*. He said that the Greek philosopher Heraclitus saw mankind as divided into two groups. The first was a moral and intellectual elite known as *the aristoi*, or "the good", (not necessarily meaning those of noble birth), and the second was *the hoi polloi*, or "the many", who were viewed as an unthinking, conforming mass. Fowles wanted readers to understand that "the dividing line should run through each individual, not between individuals."

He wrote, "I tried to establish the virtual innocence of the many. Miranda, the girl he [Clegg] imprisoned, had very little more control than Clegg over what she was: she had well-to-do parents, a good educational opportunity, inherited aptitude and intelligence. That does not mean that she was perfect. Far from it – she was arrogant in her ideas, a prig, a liberal-humanist slob, like so many university students. Yet if she had not died she might have become something better, the kind of being humanity so desperately need."

Fowles goes on to explain that the purpose of the novel was not to say that a precious elite was threatened by the barbarian hordes. Rather, that people had to face up to a born equal until **The Many** can be educated out of a false sense of inferiority and **The Few** can understand that biological superiority is not a state of existence but rather a state of responsibility. He strongly opposes the view that the idea behind *The Collector* is a fascist one.

5. Visual introduction

5.1 Intro to the play and extracts from Open House Theatre London

a)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWpIdzVXr3s>

b)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oZT5dLERn0>

5.2 _A Director`s view of the play

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHPY7n3m0iU>

Assignment 3: Presentation of a play

Collect all important information about the play from the three YOUTUBE Videos and present them to your classmates.



Assignment 4: Setting

The term "setting" is often used as a mirror to reflect the psychological state of a character.

How does the setting in "the Collector" mirror Miranda's state of mind?

Info: The Setting

Describe and comment on the time and setting of the play "The Collector".

The definition of the literary term may help you: Setting is the time and place of the story. More precisely, it may be the geographical place, the environment in which the characters live, the historical period, the season of the year or the social conditions of the character. Dramas are generally confined to more limited settings than other forms of literature, like novels, which play out in readers' imaginations.

6. A Look at the script

From Scene 4: The Dinner / Day 27

Miranda Now kiss me.

Clegg kisses her head

Miranda Not like that.

Clegg I don't want to.

Miranda You don't want to? Why not?

Clegg I might go too far.

Miranda So might I. I don't care. (*She kisses him again*)
There. All right?



Clegg (*nervously*) Yes.

Miranda Kiss me then.

Clegg *kisses her very tentatively and shifts in the chair*

Miranda What's wrong?

Clegg Nothing.

Miranda *gets up and pulls him up too*

Miranda Hold me.

Clegg I...erm...

Miranda Ssshhh

They embrace, Miranda in despair and Clegg in panic

Miranda Wait. Let's just have the lamplight.

She turns off the main light.

Miranda Don't worry, I'm not going anywhere.

Clegg It doesn't feel right. You're only pretending.

Miranda Am I? We'll see.

Clegg Please - please.

Miranda It's all right. Trust me. (*She stands back and takes off her dress. She undoes her hair and moves back to him*)

Clegg No ... You don't understand. Please ...

Miranda *starts to undo his tie and shirt*

Miranda Ssshh. I want to feel you next to me. Take this off.

She takes off his shirt and kisses him

Clegg No.

Miranda Frederick, kiss me.

Clegg No -You don't understand ... (*He pushes her away*) Stop! (*He starts to dress*)

Miranda What's wrong? (*Pause*) Please say something.

Clegg I can't. It's not right.

Miranda Don't you like me touching you? Frederick? It's nothing to be frightened of.

Clegg I'm not like other people.

Miranda That's all right. Nor am I. Look, to tell you the truth, I've never done this before either.

Clegg That's not true.

Miranda It is.

Clegg You've always got men around you.

Miranda But I've never slept with any of them.

Pause

Miranda Here, just hold me - we don't have to do anything. (*She reaches out to him*)

Clegg Don't touch me!

Assignment 5: Characters in situations

Comment on the episode where Miranda in a final attempt tries to seduce him. Why is it that Clegg loses all respect for Miranda when she attempts to seduce him?

Comment on the quote: "Clegg can only understand females as idealized figures, as characters from fairy tales, or as fallen therefore disgusting creatures."

From Act I / Prologue

Clegg

They say, "There are two sides to every story." People are always jumping to the wrong conclusions, judging situations they don't really know anything about. Unless you were there and saw what happened, took part in it, got caught up in all the feelings, you just wouldn't understand. You couldn't. The truth is a lot more complicated.

I can't say what it was about Miranda, but the very first time I saw her, I knew she was the only one. It was that simple. Seeing her felt like catching a rarity, going up to it very careful, heart-in-mouth as they say. Elusive, and sporadic, and very refined – not like the other ones, even the pretty ones.

More for the real connoisseur. Of course, I'm not mad. I knew it was just a dream and it always would have been if I hadn't won the money.

When something like that happens your whole life changes, everything, and you start to think maybe your dreams can come true.

Well, I left work. I didn't really know what to do at first. Suddenly I had all the freedom in the world. What I thought I'd do was go to all the places where you can find rare species and aberrations and get proper serious. There were so many species.

I wanted - the Swallowtail for example, and rare fritillaries like the Heath and Glanville - things that most collectors only get a go at once in a lifetime.

From Scene 4 / The next two weeks

Clegg Well everyday it was the same: I went down between eight and nine, I got her breakfast, emptied the buckets, sometime we talked a bit, she gave me any shopping she wanted done. After lunch, we usually sat and talked for a bit or she played the records I brought back or I sat and watched her draw. Then there was supper and after supper we often talked a bit more. Sometimes she made me welcome. Sometimes she made me go away as soon as supper was over. It was like we were the happiest two people in the world. No one will ever understand how happy we were – just me.

I agreed to a bath once a week. Each time I had to screw the planks into the windows - I didn't like to leave them up. She soon stopped sulking too, when she realized it did her no good. She began to accept my rules and during the following week she let me spend a lot more time with her.

Assignment 6: Characters in situations

- Explain how Clegg sees himself as a victim?
- What kind of influence does Miranda try to have on Clegg?
- What and who has influenced Frederick Clegg?
- How is Clegg not successful in meeting and understanding "The Other"?

SCENE 3 (II.2)

THE LETTER (DAY 22 continues)

The cellar. The same

Clegg (off) Miranda?

Miranda What?

Clegg (off; hesitantly) Can I come in?

Miranda quickly hides her notepad

Miranda Why?

Clegg (off) I want to ask you something.

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Miranda Well, what is it?

Clegg (off) Errmm ... I've been thinking about what you said the other day and I was wondering if you still wanted to write that letter to your parents.

Miranda (taken off guard) Are you sure? Yes, yes, of course I do. Hang on a minute though ... I'm just on the toilet.

Clegg (off) Oh, all right.

Miranda runs over to the bedside table and takes out a small note hidden in the top of a perfume bottle and hides it in her pocket. She composes herself

Miranda OK - come in.

Clegg enters the cellar sheepishly. He is wearing gloves.

Miranda This is very good of you.

Clegg (taking out a pen and paper from his jacket pocket) If we do it now, I'll send it off in the morning.

Miranda All right. (She takes the paper and goes over to the bed where she starts to write)

Clegg "Dear Mum and Dad ... "

Miranda looks up at him

Miranda (attempting a joke) Shouldn't I put the address first?

Miranda gives in to his dictation and starts writing

Clegg "I am safe and not in danger. Do not try and find me, it is impossible. I'm being well looked after by a friend." That's all. Just put your name.

Miranda Can't I say "Mr Clegg sends his regards"?

Clegg Here, you better address the envelope. (He hands her an envelope. She writes a little more and folds the letter.) Let me see that letter.

Miranda hands him the letter and, unnoticed by **Clegg**, slips the other smaller piece of paper from her pocket into the envelope. **Clegg** checks the letter and hands it back to her. **Miranda** seals the letter and gives it back to him

Miranda Thank you.

Clegg goes to leave, still fingering the envelope. He stops by the door and holds the letter up to the light. He feels it again, suspiciously, and rips it open and finds the hidden note.



Clegg (*reading*) "Kidnapped by madman. Frederick Clegg – clerk from Town Hall, won Lottery. Prisoner in cellar. Lonely, timbered cottage dated 1621. Hilly country, two hours from London. So far safe - ". (*Shocked and angry*) "Frightened"? But what have I done?

Miranda Nothing. That's why I'm frightened.

Clegg I don't understand.

Miranda (*looking down*) I'm waiting for you to do something.

Clegg I've promised and I'll promise again. You get all high and mighty because I don't take your word, I don't know why it's different for me.

Miranda I'm sorry.

Clegg I trusted you. I thought it would cheer you up, letting them know you're safe. Well, I'm not going to be used. (*He puts it in his pocket and turns away*)

Miranda (*softly*) I know I am safe here but you are keeping me here by force. I admit it is quite a gentle force, but it is frightening. Besides - you can't be a proper prisoner if you don't try to escape.

Clegg All you live for is the day you'll see the the last of me. I'm still just a nobody, aren't I?

Assignment 7: Characters in situations

- How does Miranda threaten Clegg's control? State references to the text.

-After having seen the whole play: Trace and explain how Miranda's isolation leads to alienation, first from Clegg (her captor), then from God and eventually even from herself.

Assignment 8:

Compare and contrast the two main characters. Write down dual opposites. The following may help you to get started:

Frederick Clegg	Miranda Grey
Lower-middle-class member has hardly anything but his money characterized by self-delusion, madness and schizophrenia using many clichés stagnation, inability to learn interested in science, classification and destruction: collecting implies killing, jealous Add more here...	Born into the middle-class has everything but her freedom characterized by self-awareness, common sense and many talents possesses a high degree of original thinking growth, interested in beauty, art and creation: learning how to draw and to paint. Add more here....

Assignment 9:

Which of the following controversial statements best summarizes the theme of the play "The Collector" ?

Statements:

1. The protagonist of the Collector is a very ill pervert – one of a kind!
2. The Collector makes you want to kill people like Clegg.
3. The Collector turns all decent women into whores.
4. The Collector makes you want to throw up!
5. The Collector is the beginning of what will become an obsession.
6. The Collector ultimately wants to be caught.

How can the theme of love and romance be applied to "The Collector"?

The themes of love and romance have been dealt with in every art form in every era. Today romantic films, fiction and music are as popular as ever. Try to remember a love story

Info: Theme

Theme is the central idea that directs and shapes the subject matter of a story, play or poem. It is the view of life or the insights into human experiences that the author wishes to communicate to his readers. If the theme of a work is clearly stated in the text, we may refer to it as an overt theme.

Controversial Discussion

Writing and Presentation

A lot of critics have said that Miranda deserved everything she got; she was such a young prig.

Do you agree? **Discuss in pairs.**

Imagine what kind of life Miranda would have had if she had managed to get out?

Present your personal prediction in class.

Write an essay starting with the following lines: "I believe that Miranda would have had a good life if she had managed to"

Material for further reading

7. Reviews

7.1. *The Collector* at the Arcola Theatre (2008) - Review by Anita Butler



It is said that if you stand in Leicester Square for long enough you will see someone you know. Director Ben Caplan begins Mark Healy's adaptation of John Fowles' novel (later a film) with flickering projected crowd images that gradually shift focus onto one particular face, pinpointing the beginning of pathological obsession.

For art student Miranda, Frederick Clegg is a fleeting memory from the job centre; for him,

Miranda is an unwitting catalyst for the unleashing of latent tendencies, allowing a progression from lonely butterfly collecting to the netting and pinning-down of a human subject, and on whom he has compiled a personal dossier to rival that of the best private detective.

That his argument seems at times almost plausible is due to a masterful performance from Mark Fleischmann as Frederick (never Fred or Freddie) who combines comic timing, charm, and chilling delivery in his personification of a delusion that ascribes blame onto wealth from a lottery win, allowing the purchase of secluded-house-with-cellar, rather than personal culpability.

In locking his gaze onto individual spectators, Fleischmann's monologues become private confessions, begging understanding. Reading between the lines - his courteous 'please don't oblige me to use force again' - reveals the 'monster' concealed behind the cute outer-packaging.

Rosalind Drury as Miranda shows stage-commanding promise in her first major theatrical role, her waiflike persona belying a steely resolve to survive, and whose intermittently explosive rage encapsulates sheer exasperation, both in attempting to apply logic to the illogical, and at the loss of a brave new world that only now seems truly precious.

There are indeed two sides to every story, and it is through her spoken diary entries that the terrified girl is revealed, herself somewhat obsessed with George, an older academic mentor, for whom she has never felt good enough. Her misjudged, mistimed 'masterstroke' with Frederick is the play's dramatic apogee

The giving and taking of lighting is used to stunning effect by Richard Howell: twinkling fairy lights descend to depict Miranda's temporary respite (albeit, bound and supervised) into dewy garden freshness; and the illumination of her lovely face adds pathos to a lament at having not seen the sun for so long.

Moments like these cement the claustrophobic, dank, horror of the cell, assisted by the smallness of the venue and contemporary revelations of grim cellar contents that provide a psychological blueprint of capture and co-dependency.

Despite Drury's touching fortitude, the story is hopeless and unsettling in its tenor that one person, at random, can change another's life and how that life is remembered. Frederick's summation that we must learn from our mistakes is tempered by the realisation that his work will continue, next time devoid of 'love' - his one redeeming quality.

It is disquieting that book and film have been implicated as ciphers for past serial killers. But, as a theatrical experience, *The Collector* is faultless. It perhaps takes a threat to one's liberty to fully appreciate what freedom means: never has the idea of being a boring, faceless unknown seemed so attractive.

7.2. *The Collector* at the Camden People's Theatre, London
Published Wednesday 29 June 2005 by Jason Best

Britain is a very different country now than when John Fowles wrote his best-selling 1963 novel about an introverted clerk who kidnaps a vivacious young art student - but even if his anatomisation of class differences no longer rings quite so true, his study of a psychopathic desire for possession hasn't lost its power to shock and unsettle.

In his adaptation for Not Now! Theatre Company, Mark Healy has lightly updated Fowles' novel to the present day. James Topping's obsessive butterfly collector, Frederick, has now scooped the Lottery rather than winning the pools but he remains riddled with inferiority when confronted with the object of his repressed desire, Katherine McDowell's self-possessed doctor's daughter Miranda.

Charlotte Chadd's stage production conveys the paradoxes of the shifting balance of power between the two antagonists - having confined his victim to the cellar of his country house, Frederick has complete physical mastery, yet intellectually and socially Miranda has the upper hand.

Yet once she has established this dynamic, Chadd fails to turn the screw of suspense as effectively as she might and for much of the play's overlong running time, the narrative doesn't grip as tightly as it should.

Perhaps it is because Edward Wilford's set, for all its impressive detail, isn't claustrophobic enough. Perhaps McDowell's Miranda spends too much time being poised not petrified. Or

Further discussion:

In "The Collector" John Fowles explores the mind of a psychopathic murderer.

Although there is no direct reference to the narrator's state of mind in the text, numerous clues warn the perceptive reader of the narrator's mental instability. Find these clues.

What is a psychopath? The Oxford English dictionary defines a psychopath as:

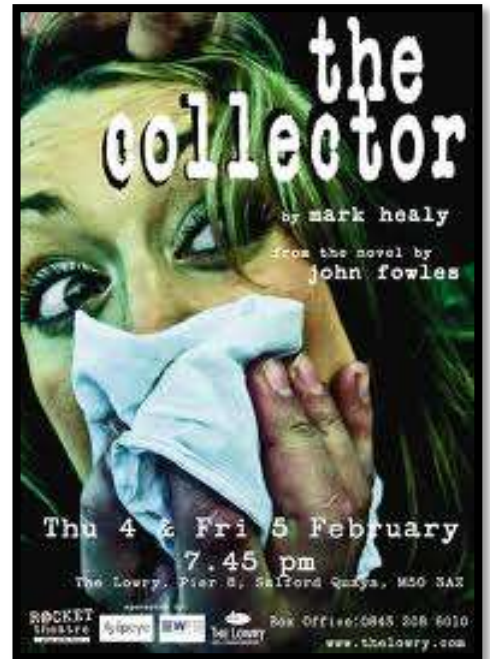
1. A person suffering from chronic mental disorder, esp. with abnormal or violent social behaviour.
2. A mentally or emotionally unstable person. Try to create your own pen picture of a psychopath using the headings below.

perhaps Topping's derangement isn't truly menacing, even though he effectively conveys Frederick's cringing social unease and disturbed mental state. It is only in the play's latter stages, in fact, that Chadd and her cast manage to fuse the story's class warfare and psychological combat to produce a real frisson of fear

8. Modern-Day Kidnappings: *The Collector*

Close to Reality

The Collector is a superb psychological drama, by turns sad, tense and horrific. The basic plot is certainly very straightforward and sadly kidnappings take place every day all over the world. It is also very close to reality: The last few decades have seen numerous examples worldwide of horrifying stories about men who have imprisoned children and women for several years. Just think of Austrian Wolfgang Priklopil who kept Natasha Kampusch in his cellar for eight years. The Collector is a most qualified attempt to explain the inner life of such an abductor and his victim in a way that is not purely black and white. There is even a strange strain of thought that suggests many of these have been inspired by Fowles' book.



The issue of KIDNAPPING

Comment on other forms of kidnapping!

For instance: Political – hostage for money – prisoners of war – terrorists suspects. Add more yourself.

Draw a mind-map starting with a question: Why do people kidnap other people? (E.g. for ransom money, to gain awareness for a political cause. Add more.)

Search the net what does the phrase, "Stockholm Syndrome" mean? Is there any evidence of that happening in "the Collector"?

The following are all stories of people (mostly youths) who were kidnapped or seriously abused.

Read the "5 Terrible Cases of Kidnapping and Abuse" and comment on one or two of the cases that made you think of Miranda's destiny in "The Collector".

5 Different Cases of Kidnapping and Abuse

1. Masha was living in a Russian orphanage when an American man was allowed to adopt her. He was divorced and no background check was done on him; also no follow-up visits were ever conducted by the New Jersey based adoption agency. He began sexually abusing her almost immediately, and shortly thereafter, using her in Internet child pornography. So much so that the police began a task force to find this poor child who was all over the Internet. The Associations with serial killers search was profiled on CNN, where police digitally removed the girl's image leaving only her surroundings in the hopes someone would recognize her location. One picture people were able to identify was a bedspread from a hotel at a Disney theme park. After several years of this incomprehensible lifestyle, police rescued Masha.

2. Elizabeth Fritzel's father Joseph kept her locked in a secret basement compound in Austria for 24 years with three of the seven children he fathered with her. Fritzel and his wife, Rosemarie, raised the other three living children Joseph Fritzel fathered with his eldest daughter. Upon finding out what was going on in the cellar, the Fritzel family as well as their community were apparently shocked by the news, completely unaware of Joseph Fritzel's evil tendencies. Regarding the three children who lived their lives entirely in the cellar, Kerstin Fritzel, 19, and her brothers Stefan, 18, and Felix, five, have been alone in the cellar for so long that they developed their own type of communication via growls, grunts and animal like sounds. Elizabeth Fritzel had tried to teach them and let them have a normal life in the cellar.

3. David Pelzer is the author and subject of the gut-wrenching true story "A Child Called It." He spent his childhood enduring unimaginable abuse at the hands of his mother, while his father and siblings simply watched. David's mother was apparently relatively loving and caring to his siblings, but had a deep, unfathomable hatred for David that lead her to put him through increasingly creative and shocking punishments. Concerned school officials eventually rescued him.

4. Genie was a girl born in California in 1957 who spent nearly all of the first 13 years of her life locked in her room. Born to mentally unstable parents, at a very young age Genie was diagnosed as developmentally delayed and her father took that diagnosis and decided on his own treatment for Genie. Genie spent the next 12 years of her life locked in her bedroom. During the day, she was tied to a child's potty-chair in diapers; at night, she was bound in a sleeping bag and placed in an enclosed crib with a cover made of metal screening. Her father beat her every time she vocalized, and he barked and growled at her like a dog in order to keep her quiet. He also rarely allowed his wife and son to leave the house or even to speak, and he expressly forbade them to speak to Genie. By the age of 13, Genie was almost entirely mute, commanding a vocabulary of about 20 words and a few short phrases (nearly all negative), such as "stop it" and "no more". Genie was discovered at the age of 13, when her mother ran away from her husband and took her daughter with her.



5. Natascha Kampusch is an Austrian woman who was abducted at the age of 10 on 2 March 1998, and remained in custody of her kidnapper, Wolfgang Priklopil, for more than eight years, until she escaped on 23 August 2006. During the eight years of her captivity, Kampusch was held in a small cellar underneath Priklopil's garage. For the first six months of her captivity, Kampusch was not allowed to leave the chamber at any time, and for several years after her kidnapping she was not allowed to leave the tiny space at night. According to Kampusch's official statement after her escape, she and Priklopil would get up early each morning to have breakfast together.

Priklopil gave her books, so she educated herself, and according to a colleague of his, she appeared happy. The 18-year old Kampusch reappeared on 23 August 2006. She was cleaning and vacuuming her kidnapper's BMW 850i in the garden. At 12:53pm, someone called Priklopil on his mobile phone, and he walked away to take the call because of the vacuuming noise. Kampusch left the vacuum cleaner running and ran to the police. Priklopil, having found that the police were after him, killed himself by jumping in front of a suburban train near the Wien Nord station in Vienna. He had apparently planned to commit suicide rather than be caught, having told Kampusch that "they would not catch him alive."

8.2. The literary model and reality

In several cases since the novel was published, serial killers, spree killers, kidnappers, and other criminals have claimed that *The Collector* was the basis, the inspiration, or the justification for their crimes.

Leonard Lake and Charles N

In 1985, [Leonard Lake](#) (with help from [Charles Chi-Tat Ng](#)) abducted 18-year-old Kathy Allen and later 19-year-old Brenda O'Connor, to satisfy his fantasy of owning his own "Miranda". He is said to have been utterly obsessed with *The Collector*. Lake described his plan for using the women for sex and housekeeping in a "philosophy" videotape. The two are believed to have murdered at least 25 people, including two entire families. Although Lake had committed several crimes in the [Ukiah, California](#) area, his "Operation Miranda" did not begin until after he moved to remote [Wilseyville, California](#). The videotapes of his murders and a diary written by Lake were found buried near the bunker in Wilseyville. They revealed that Lake had named his plot *Operation Miranda* after the character in Fowles' book.

Robert Andrew "Bob" Berdella (January 31, 1949 – October 8, 1992) was an American serial killer in Kansas City, Missouri who raped, tortured and killed at least six men between 1984 and 1987

Berdella was apprehended on April 2, 1988, after a victim he had been torturing for a week jumped naked from the second story of his house and escaped, wearing only a dog collar. By that time, he had abducted and tortured at least six young men, and the Kansas City Police Department suspected him in two other disappearances. Berdella had detailed torture logs and large numbers of Polaroid pictures he had taken of his victims. Volumes of pictures were recovered by the Kansas City Police Department, and remain in their possession. He claimed that he was trying to "help" some of his victims by giving them antibiotics after torturing them. Methods of torture included electrical shocks, puncturing their anal cavities with his fist, applying bleach to their eyes by way of cotton swabs, and even injecting their vocal cords with drain cleaner. He tried to gouge one of his victim's eyes out "to see what would happen". He buried one victim's skull in his backyard, put dismembered bodies out for the weekly trash pickup, and had an industrial-grade garbage disposal on the drain in his basement. The bodies were never recovered but left in the landfill.

A few months before the arrest was made, Berdella was offered a ride home from a bar by people who noticed he was too intoxicated to drive. On the way back, Berdella allegedly told stories about young men he had abducted and tortured in the previous months. It was not taken seriously at that time considering his advanced state of intoxication.

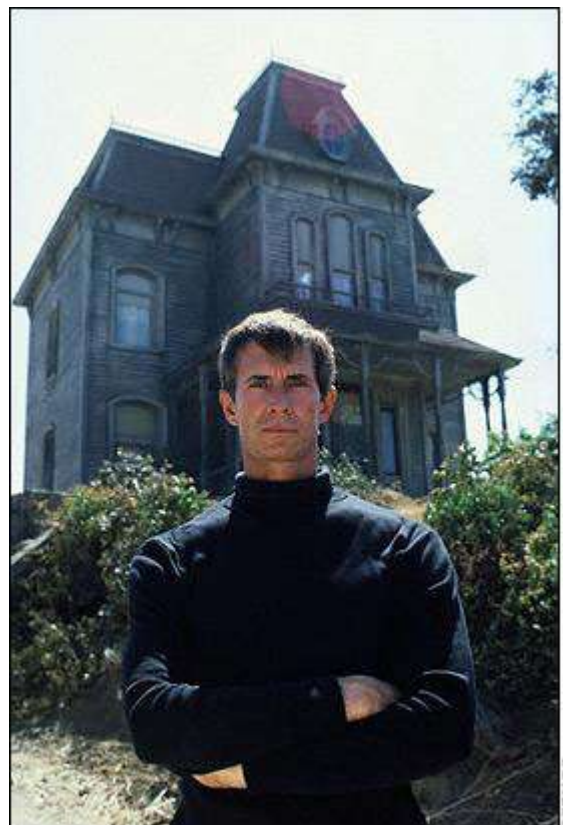
He claimed that the film version of John Fowles' *The Collector*, in which the protagonist kidnaps and imprisons a young woman, had been his inspiration when he was a teenager.

9. Serial Killer Movies

Gein's Legacy

When the police went to the farmhouse in Plainfield, Wisconsin, where Gein lived alone after the passing of his parents and brother, they meant to question him about a robbery, but he wasn't there. Entering a deteriorating out-building, they spotted what seemed to be a dressed deer carcass hanging from the rafters. On closer inspection, they realized that this corpse was human. Hung feet first was the headless body of a woman, slit from her genitals to her neck, with her legs splayed apart. They wondered if this might be a missing storekeeper, Bernice Worden.

Next, the police entered Gein's house and their questions were answered. Inside they found all **Anthony Perkins as Norman Bates outside the house in "Psycho"**



manner of body parts, including skin, a box of preserved female genitalia, a heart in a frying pan, a box of noses, the sawed-off crania from several skulls, death masks, a skin vest with breasts, and a female scalp with black hair.

Gein admitted that he'd stolen most of them from the local cemetery, but he'd also killed Bernice Worden, as well as another missing woman, Mary Hogan. He was suspected in the disappearance of four others, but those women he did kill or dig up had been about the size of his mother and he'd been using skin from the bodies to make himself a female "suit." Alone and socially inept, Gein had devoured books on human anatomy and Nazi experiments, sending away for shrunken heads. Although he denied consuming the flesh, some who studied the case believe he did.

As well, he kept a shrine of his dead mother in a room, which became the basis for the demented character, **Norman Bates, in *Psycho***. Whenever he feels lust, he cringes under the load of guilt from his Puritanical mother. So he kills the object of it, restoring his "balance" and pleasing his dead mother, kept mummified in her room. He also transforms into her, as a case of multiple personality disorder.

Gein was found to be insane (unable to grasp the nature of his acts) and incarcerated in an institution, where he eventually died in 1984, but his psychosis lives on in these films. The Hewitts are cannibals, devouring body parts like candy. Leatherface, a grave-robber, wears a mask made of skin and a bloody butcher's apron. Norman Bates has transgender issues with a violent twist. His crimes were recreated in *House of 1,000 Corpses* (2003) as an amusement park ride.



